

Chelsea Elementary School
Governing Board Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2008

Present

Francois Simard
Lauren Barber
Kristine Ronn
Richard Bieri
Benoit Monette
Christine Faveri
Joanne Haddad Lawson

Amanda McKeown
Kalli Lahtinen
Lise Favreau
Ralph Mason (Principal)
Matthew Cahoon (outgoing Chair)
Kate Iob
Joey Gendron (A4 Rep)

Regrets

Carmen Griffith
Celine Brault

Special Guests

Dean Stinson O’Gorman
Parent attendance : Gwen

1a. Introduction – Ralph Mason

A ‘welcome’ to new and returning GB members.

Clarification of voting procedure in case of a tie: Chair (which has to be a parent) can be deciding vote.

Selection of a new Secretary: Kristine and Lauren agreed to share the task of taking minutes.

Election of a new Chair

Francois volunteered to be Chair and all members were in favour.

Acceptance of agenda

The following items were added to “Varia” of the agenda:

- a. Liaison opportunities with Grand Boise School / Parent (Gwen) joint Christmas concert
- b. Creative space solutions needed for A4 / should space be given for Dean’s wrestling request?
- c. Role of community representative on the governing board – suggestion: Lori Garbutt (Note that Benoit Monette is the GB rep. on the WQSB Parent Committee)
- d. Entente/Chelsea School facilities.

Agenda was unanimously approved

1b Outgoing Chair – Matthew Cahoon comments / address to GB

Matthew spoke briefly about his time as Chair:

He enjoyed the 2 years he spent on GB as Chair, but had family/work commitments which required more of his time.

Our former Principal, Sandra Burgess and Staff were excellent.

There were challenging issues last year – illnesses, A4 portables.

Provided his vote of confidence for our new Principal, Ralph Mason.

That he could make himself available to GB for any advice he might be able to provide.

Francois thanked Matthew for his commitment and involvement in the school.

As did all the members of GB.

2. Election of Alternative parent Representative-WQSB PC

Former Parent Rep, Christine Faveri volunteered to be the alternative. This was unanimously approved.

3a. SEAC Representation – see attachment

Special Education Advisory Commission Representative: Represents school at School Board meetings in obtaining resources for the school's COE program.

- Joanne suggested that our Rep be a parent of a child with special needs, although it wasn't essential.
- Further to this, Ralph clarified that the member didn't need to be someone from the GB, just someone who would keep GB in the loop.
- Maya Pushfin (a Chelsea school parent of a special needs child) was the Rep last year and seemed interested to be again. **Action Item:** Francois would make contact with Maya to confirm whether she would be interested in continuing on in this position. Matthew added that she didn't necessarily have to attend GB, but should get a copy of the minutes to keep up two-way communication.
- Kate (COE teacher) volunteered as Maya's backup.

3b. Format of Business 2008/2009

Open Forum

- Matthew clarified that any meeting was open to the public. He also added that guest presentations needed prior approval from our Principal.

Secretary

- Alternate minutes will be done by Kristine and Lauren.

Agenda Format

- Chair and Principal will meet prior to GB meeting to prepare Agenda.
- It was discussed that if GB members could receive a copy of the Agenda prior to the meeting to familiarize themselves. **Action Item:** Ralph suggested that he could email the Agenda with attachments on the Monday of the week. This was agreed upon by all.

The following are tentative dates selected for our 2008/09 GB Meetings:

Dec. 4th (combining Nov&Dec), Jan. 22nd, Feb. 19th, March 19th, April 23rd, May 21st, June 18th.

4. Wrestling Proposal (Guest: Dean Stinson O’Gorman) – see attachment

Dean presented his request for use of the Chelsea School gym one evening a week to offer wrestling lessons, including need for an approx 10x10ft use of space for storing their wrestling mats. See attached for details of request and program.

He suggested that if a financially viable arrangement could be met with the school, then perhaps Chelsea school participants could receive a reduction in the cost.

The program is best suited for children in grades 5 and up.

Issues discussed after Dean’s departure:

- There is presently a shortage of space for our own A4 program – see Varia points.
- Existing “Entente” with the Municipality has expired, leaving a verbal, loose arrangement on how the School and Municipality share their facilities for the community’s programs. It was agreed that the need to develop a new Entente was essential. – see Varia points.

5. Budget Review – see attachment

Ralph outlined that the final amount used in the budget had not yet been confirmed (Sept30 pop count) and that going by last year’s budget and student population, he estimates that it should be approx. \$31,000.

Further, these funds would be used in a way which was fundamentally the same as last year, with the following exception:

An increase in funds would be put towards technology since the government was offering a tech grant matching \$1.00 for every .30c invested, which when equated with our student population, represents a significant return on the school’s investment. This was seen as a worthwhile use of funds.

6. Organizational Plan / School Success – see attachment

Ralph discussed use of an extra .71 funding units available as a host COE school (i.e. 1 unit is equivalent to an average teacher's salary). He has opted for reducing class size by use of additional teaching resources. – see outline in attachment.

As “Professional Development”, Ralph plans to continue spreading and deepening the use of the TRIBES and Instructional Intelligences approaches.

7. Technology – see attachment

Ralph presented his Technology Vision for Chelsea School based on a 1-4 year plan. He outlined goals and alternatives for Year 1. See attachment for details.

Lauren mentioned that since her husband worked in this field, there were often auctions of used equipment which could be useful for the school.

It was further added, that perhaps there should be more publicity around the school's website “wish list” – since school budgets are tight and often our parent community may have opportunities through their work or otherwise to support the school without realizing it.

Action Item: Ralph said that he would remind parents of our ‘wish list’ in school newsletter/website.

8. Teacher's Report

9. Daycare Report – Joey – see attachment

As an A4 staff member, Joey outlined the special events presently taking place in our A4 program – see list attached.

Amongst them, Joey mentioned that the daycare was in need of more right handed baseball gloves if anyone has some to donate.

Varia

a. Grand Boise/Chelsea liaison: Lise explained that the Staff had decided that a joint Grand Boise/Chelsea school Christmas performance would not be undertaken – instead that a Christmas concert was a good idea as our own in-house project. The preparation time would be taken from the former International day time resource.

Lise also added that there was a start in a liaison between the schools with the development to provide some cooperative grade 5 French studies. Lise also mentioned that she had met Grand Boise's new English teacher and that she was very keen to have some kind of cooperative learning arrangement with our school.

b. Creative space solutions for A4:

Ralph discussed with the group that he has concerns with having the A4 activities take place in the Grand Hall and other unsafe, open, high traffic areas. He explained that the A4 program initially relocated to where they are now as an interim solution until the plight of the portables had been resolved, and that it should not remain as a permanent solution by default.

He continued to say that the set up in the Grand Hall presented itself as unsafe in case of an emergency evacuation. He also added that, as much as parents have a chance to see what their children are doing upon entering the school, they are at the same time presented with a cluttered appearance in the school's main entrance.

The GB members agreed that a better space arrangement using classrooms needed to be reached.

Christine and Joanne volunteered to form a sub-committee to attend an A4 meeting to help work out a space solution.

It was generally felt that a better, safer and easier space solution was essential going into the future – whilst still ensuring that the exceptionally high level of programming offered by our A4 educators would not be compromised.

c. Community Rep: A GB member suggested that Laurie Garbutt would be a good candidate as our Community Representative. **Action Item:** It was agreed that a GB meeting invitation should be sent to her.

d. 'Entente' / Chelsea school facilities

It was generally agreed (some members had left by then) that until a more comprehensive and formal "Entente" had been developed and agreed upon between our school and the Municipality, and that also given the present shortage of space for our own in-house A4 program – that the "outside" use of Chelsea School's facilities should not be added to.

Members agreed that the request presented by Dean (Wrestling lessons) should not be approved for this reason.

At the end of the meeting, Ralph briefly presented the school's new website.
The meeting was adjourned.